

## Upper Mississippi River National Wildlife and Fish Refuge

### Alternative E Summary: So What Will the CCP Really Do?

- Acquire from willing sellers 15,000 acres of land within boundary.
- Seek protection for 13 bluffland areas within the approved boundary.
- Improve water quality and reduce and/or address sedimentation.
- Complete pool-wide drawdowns on as many pools as practicable to enhance habitat
- Inventory and reduce invasive plants 10% by 2010, work with others on invasive animals.
- Complete \$150 million worth of habitat restoration and enhancement projects or \$10 million per year compared to \$2.7 million per year on refuge from the Environmental Management Program.
- Increase wildlife monitoring and research efforts to guide management.
- Increase emphasis on fishery and mussel management in cooperation with the states and Corps of Engineers.
- Complete an inventory of the 51,000 acres of refuge forest and begin management actions.
- Maintain abundant hunting and fishing opportunities, and increase opportunities for wildlife observation, photography, interpretation and environmental education.
- Adjust the system of Waterfowl Hunting Closed Areas established in 1958 to meet the food and rest needs of migrating waterfowl. This means deleting some, adding some, and adjusting boundaries on others. Total acres will drop a bit, from 44,544 acres to 43,764, although a special hunt area and no open water hunting area will increase overall acreage that has some restrictions.
- Reduce human disturbance to waterfowl and other wildlife using closed areas with a blend of voluntary measures and targeted regulations.
- Help ensure a quality hunting experience for the broadest cross-section of the public by eliminating permanent blinds in Pools 12-14 and addressing crowding/behavior issues on a portion of Pool 7.
- Better manage commercial-type activities on the refuge such as guiding services, fish floats, and fishing tournaments in cooperation with the states and Corps.
- Fine tune existing beach-related uses such as camping and general recreation to safeguard both wildlife and people.
- Establish 5 electric motor only areas totaling 1,852 acres (1 exists now) and 8 seasonal slow, no wake areas totaling 9,720 acres to reduce disturbance to fish and wildlife in backwater areas and provide alternative experiences for refuge visitors. These areas represent about 8% of the water area of the refuge, and less than 5% of the entire refuge.
- Establish a new and relaxed dog policy that allows owners to exercise and train their dogs while safeguarding other visitors and wildlife.
- Improve refuge boat, canoe, and walk-in accesses.
- Replace or construct 4 new offices and 5 new maintenance facilities to replace rental space or aging facilities.
- Increase public information efforts and programs.
- Increase staff to minimum levels to increase stewardship capabilities for private lands work, fisheries, forestry, biological monitoring, maintenance, visitor services, and law enforcement.
- Price tag over 15 years if every objective/strategy funded: \$227.8 million, of which \$177 million (78%) is habitat restoration, maintenance, and land acquisition.